

# SAFETY MESSAGE

Personal Safety is our #1 priority

## **Black Widow Spider:** Compiled by USDA-APHIS-CCEP

Small, shiny, black, button-shaped spider with a red hourglass mark on its abdomen. They prefer warm climates and live in places such as hollow stumps and trees, under stones and in rodent burrows. Black widow spider bites release a toxin that can cause damage to the nervous system, thus emergency medical treatment is necessary.



### **Symptoms:**

- Symptoms usually begin 1-3 hrs after bite
- Intense pain
- Rigid abdominal muscles
- Muscle cramping
- Restlessness
- Local sweating
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Tremors
- Increased blood pressure

### **Treatment:**

- Wash the area well with soap and water.
- Apply a cold or ice pack wrapped in a cloth, or a cold, wet washcloth to the site.
- To protect against infection, apply an antibiotic lotion or cream.
- Give acetaminophen for pain.
- Seek immediate emergency care for further treatment. Depending on the severity of the bite, treatment may include muscle relaxants, pain relievers and other medications, and supportive care. Antivenin may be needed, although it is usually not required. Hospitalization may be needed.